

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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P 282145Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1204

UNCLAS OTTAWA 3914

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, CA

SUBJ: MEL HURTIG RE AMBASSADOR ENDERS

1. MEL HURTIG, EDMONTON PUBLISHER AND FORMER HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE FOR AN INDEPENDENT CANADA, IS IN OTTAWA TO ADDRESS THE OTTAWA BRANCH OF THE CIC ON "THE MYTHOLOGY OF THOMAS ENDERS" ON SEPT.

28. FOR PAST TWO DAYS, HURTIG HAS ATTRACTED CONSIDERABLE PUSLCITY IN LOCAL MEDIA BY APPEARING ON LOCAL RADIO TALK SHOW, AND TELEVISION INTERVIEWS. CALLING HIM A "DOWNRIGHT LIAR" HURTIG HAS LAUNCHED PERSONAL ATTACK ON THE AMBASSADOR AND AC-CUSING HIM OF DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE CANADIAN PUBLIC IN HIS SPEECHES. QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S SPEECHES ARE "FULL OF MISLEADING DISTORTION, LOADED WITH BLATANT INACCURACIES AND DECEPTIVELY ADVOCATING POLICIES DEFINITELY NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CANADA", HURTIG HAS PREDICTED THAT PUBLIC RESENTMENT WILL BOIL UP ACROSS CANADA IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S "SCARCELY CONCEALED THREATS".

2. HURTIG HAS CONCENTRATED HIS ATTACK ON WHAT THE AMBASSADOR HAS HAD TO SAY ON THE REDUCTION OF DIRECT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN CANADA IN THE 1970'S. HERTIG HAS BEEN CITING FIGURES SHOWING AN INCREASE IN U.S. INVESTMENT AND CONTROL INCLUDING RE-INVESTMENT OF PROFITS OF CANADIAN AND US FIRMS TO SUSTAIN ECONOMIC GROWTH. HERTIG HAS SAID THAT THE U.S. HAS BEEN IN-VESTING RECORD AMOUNTS IN CANADA. "OBVIOUSLY, EITHER MR. ENDERS

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IS NOT VERY HONEST OR HE HAS A VERY LOW OPINION OF THE CANADIAN

ABILITY TO ADD AND SUBTRACT," HERTIG IS QUOTED AS SAYING.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, EMBASSY SPOKESMAN HAS ISSUED FOLLOWING STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO MEDIA INQUIRIES: "WE BELIEVE THAT MORE OPEN AND OBJECTIVE DEBATE BETWEEN CANADIANS AND AMERICANS ON THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIP THEY WANT TO HAVE IS A GOOD THING.

" WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE TRANSCRIPT OF MR. HURTIG'S REMARKS, BUT IF THEY ARE AS INTEMPERATE AND AS ABUSIVE AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS, NO USEFUL PURPOSES WOULD BE SERVED BY OUR COMMENT ON THEM."

4. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY HERTIG HAS DECIDED TO MOUNT AN UNPRECEDENTED PERSONAL ATTACK ON THE AMBASSADOR. HURTIG IS A GLIB BUT SUPERFICIAL SPOKESMAN FOR NATIONALISTIC CAUSES AND IS NO GENERALLY TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY INFORMED OBSERVORS OF CANADIAN-US RELATIONS. HIS TACTICS MAY BE THE RESULT OF A GENERAL LACK OF INTEREST IN THE CIC AND IT MAY BE THAT HE THINKS THIS SPATE OF PUBLICITY WILL HELP THE CAUSE, PARTICULARLY IF HE BELIEVES HE COULD GOAD THE MISSION INTO A PUBLIC DEBATE. CONGEN TORONTO (SEE TORONTO'S 1572) HAS REPORTED THAT, ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS, ONLY 62 OF 7600 MEMBERS SHOWEDUP AT LAST CIC MEETING IN NOVA SCOTIA. HURTIG'S HIGH PROFILE IN THE PRESS BASED ON HIS EMOTIONAL ATTACK MAY BE THE RESULT OF FRUSTRATION CAUSED BY INDIFFERENCE TO HIS CAUSE. ENDERS

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